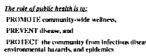
Late Backup



Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department





Small Business Workforce Development Pilot Program

Austin City Council

December 9, 2010

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Background

June 24, 2010

 Council directed the City Manager to develop a workforce development program incorporating classroom learning and on-the-job training in Austin's small businesses and to research funding opportunities to implement such a program

October 28, 2010

• Interim Progress Report provided to Council

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Three Goals

- Connect individuals to employment opportunities with small businesses
- Provide small businesses with a motivated workforce
- Make available business education curriculum to individuals interested in self-employment

Stakeholder Input

Participants Included:

- HHSD and EGRSO
- Travis County Health & Human Services
- Local Small Business Owners and Alliances
- COA Workforce Development Contractors
- Local Workforce Board
- Austin Community College
- Unemployed Job Seekers

Stakeholder Conclusions

- · Very basic workplace competency skills are needed
- A formal Workplace Readiness Certification process/program is highly desirable by job seekers and small businesses
- Paid internships are a critical consideration affecting the ability of small businesses and job seekers to participate
- After job seekers become employees, maintain connections to develop the necessary combination of motivation and skills to succeed as employees of a small business
- Interested individuals would be identified to participate in Small Business Education curriculum for possible future selfemployment or business ownership
- Funding for a modest pilot program would provide hard data to make a longer-term funding opportunity (i.e., grants) more viable

Recommended Pilot Components

- · Common assessment tool at workforce development organizations
- Pre-employment training in general competencies leading to Workplace Readiness Certification
- Certified job seckers placed into paid internship in local small businesses that are selected for the pilot
- Internship wages paid by project no requirement for businesses to permanently hire the job seekers
- · Job seekers also matched with a small business mentor
- Job seekers' connections to workforce development agency maintained throughout program, including post-employment support if funding allows

Next Steps

- Hold activities related to this pilot until after the current Social Services Self-Sufficiency RFP is complete (May 2011)
- Plan and implement pilot contingent on Council approval and identification of funding
 - Funding was discussed but specific sources were not identified
 - This may be best completed by a community organization, not the City of Austin
- Evaluate pilot results to determine needed program adjustments and/or larger-scale feasibility
- If judged effective, seek and secure long-term, largerscale funding